

Assembly Bill No. 222

CHAPTER 97

An act to amend Sections 221.1, 492, 4171, 31108, 31752, and 77067 of the Food and Agricultural Code, relating to agriculture.

[Approved by Governor July 25, 2011. Filed with
Secretary of State July 25, 2011.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 222, Committee on Agriculture. Food and Agriculture: omnibus bill.

(1) Existing law establishes the Department of Food and Agriculture Fund, a continuously appropriated fund used for specified purposes relating to enforcement of various provisions of law relating to various agriculture programs. Notwithstanding those provisions, existing law requires the Department of Food and Agriculture to establish all permanent positions within the department with the Controller's office pursuant to standard state administrative practices, and to report to the chairs of the fiscal committees of the Legislature, no later than January 10, 2005, on the positions established and funded, as specified.

Existing law also establishes the Food Biotechnology Task Force and authorizes the task force to request particular agencies to lead the effort to evaluate various factors related to food biotechnology. Existing law requires the task force to report the issues studied, findings, basis for their findings, and recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature by January 1, 2003.

This bill would delete the obsolete reporting requirements from these provisions.

(2) Existing law divides the state into agricultural districts, as specified, and provides for district agricultural associations, which are state institutions. Existing law authorizes the 50th District Agricultural Association, with the consent of the Secretary of Food and Agriculture, to enter into a joint powers agreement for, among other purposes, the purpose of creating a joint powers agency to operate, maintain, and improve the facilities and functions of the 50th District Agricultural Association. Existing law requires, prior to the commencement of the joint powers agreement, the parties to the agreement and the Department of Food and Agriculture to ensure that every employee in the civil service of the 50th District Agricultural Association is provided with the option of continuing his or her employment with the state. Existing law requires the joint powers agency to contract with the department for the services of the employee who chooses to continue his or her employment with the state, consistent with his or her civil service classification and status.

This bill would authorize the joint powers agency to contract with the department or the 50th District Agricultural Association for the services of an employee, consistent with his or her civil service classification and status.

(3) Existing law requires that the holding period for a stray dog or a stray cat impounded in a shelter be 6 business days, not including the day of impoundment, with exceptions, as provided.

This bill would define the term “business day” for purposes of these provisions as any day that a public or private shelter is open to the public for at least 4 hours, excluding state holidays.

(4) Existing law establishes the California Walnut Commission, composed of 8 walnut producers, 4 walnut handlers, and one member of the public. Existing law requires the commission to elect alternate members, and provides for the appointment of ex officio members.

Existing law provides that each member of the commission or each alternate member serving in place of a member, except for ex officio government members, and each member of a committee established by the commission who is a nonmember of the commission, may receive per diem not to exceed \$100 per day, as established by the commission, for each day spent in actual attendance at, or in traveling to and from, meetings of the commission or committees of the commission, or on special assignment from the commission. Existing law also authorizes members of the commission to receive necessary traveling expenses and meal allowances, as approved by the commission.

This bill would delete the provision for a \$100 per diem for members, alternate members, and committee members, and would instead provide that members of the commission may receive an amount not to exceed the reasonable and necessary traveling expenses and meal allowances, as established by the commission.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 221.1 of the Food and Agricultural Code is amended to read:

221.1. Notwithstanding Section 221, the department shall establish all permanent positions with the Controller’s office, pursuant to standard state administrative practices.

SEC. 2. Section 492 of the Food and Agricultural Code is amended to read:

492. (a) The Legislature hereby creates the Food Biotechnology Task Force. The task force shall be cochaired by the Secretary of California Health and Human Services, and the Secretary of the California Department of Food and Agriculture. The task force shall consult with appropriate state agencies and the University of California. The Department of Food and Agriculture shall be the lead agency.

(b) An advisory committee shall be appointed by the task force to provide input on issues reviewed by the task force. The advisory committee shall

consist of representatives from consumer groups, environmental organizations, farmers, ranchers, representatives from the biotechnology industry, researchers, organic farmers, food processors, retailers, and others with interests in the issues surrounding biotechnology.

(c) The Department of Food and Agriculture shall make funds available to other agencies to accomplish the purposes of this article and shall contract, where appropriate, with the California Council on Science and Technology, the University of California, or other entities to review issues evaluated by the task force or support activities of the advisory committee.

(d) The task force may request particular agencies to lead the effort to evaluate various factors related to food biotechnology. As funding becomes available, the task force shall evaluate factors including all of the following:

(1) Definition and categorization of food biotechnology and production processes.

(2) Scientific literature on the subject, and a characterization of information resources readily available to consumers.

(3) Issues related to domestic and international marketing of biotechnology foods such as the handling, processing, manufacturing, distribution, labeling, and marketing of these products.

(4) Potential benefits and impacts to human health, the state's economy, and the environment accruing from food biotechnology.

(5) Existing federal and state evaluation and oversight procedures.

(e) An initial sum of one hundred twenty-five thousand dollars (\$125,000) is hereby appropriated from the General Fund for disbursement to the Department of Food and Agriculture. It is the intent of the Legislature to make further funds available to accomplish the purposes contained in this article.

SEC. 3. Section 4171 of the Food and Agricultural Code is amended to read:

4171. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the 50th District Agricultural Association, with the consent of the secretary, may enter into a joint powers agreement pursuant to Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 6500) of Division 7 of Title 1 of the Government Code for the purpose of creating a joint powers agency to operate, maintain, and improve the facilities and functions of the 50th District Agricultural Association. This joint powers agency's duties shall include planning, designing, and constructing real property improvements, including new construction, alteration, extension, betterment, and repair, and purchasing fixed and movable equipment related to the facilities and functions of the 50th District Agricultural Association.

(b) The joint powers agency may accept the donation of, acquire, own, sell, or lease real property, and may pledge its property or revenue for the sale of bonds to construct, equip, and furnish the facilities, parking facilities, and any betterments, improvements, and facilities related thereto.

(c) The joint powers agency may make and enter into contracts and employ agents and employees. The joint powers agency may manage, maintain, and operate the facilities, or may enter into management contracts for the operation of the facilities. The planning, designing, and constructing

of these improvements, and the agency's other duties, as specified in this section, shall be undertaken in accordance only with those restrictions applicable to the joint powers agency.

(d) Prior to the commencement of the joint powers agreement, the parties to the agreement and the department shall ensure that every employee in the civil service of the 50th District Agricultural Association is provided with the option of continuing his or her employment with the state, or of accepting a position as an employee of the joint powers agency.

(1) With respect to an employee who chooses to continue his or her employment with the state, the employee shall continue to be subject to all of the provisions governing civil service employees, and, additionally, all of the following shall apply:

(A) The joint powers agency shall contract with the department or the 50th District Agricultural Association for the services of the employee, consistent with his or her civil service classification and status.

(B) The employee has the right to continue to provide services to the joint powers agency pursuant to that contract during the time the employee continues in the civil service classification he or she held at the time of the employee's election.

(2) With respect to an employee who chooses to leave his or her employment with the state and become an employee of the joint powers agency, those employees are not employees of the state, and are not subject to the requirements of Chapter 10.3 (commencing with Section 3512) and Chapter 10.5 (commencing with Section 3525) of Division 4 of Title 1 of the Government Code.

(3) If a position filled by a civil service employee pursuant to contract with the department becomes vacant, the joint powers agency may fill the position with a non-civil-service employee.

(e) If the joint powers agency contracts with another entity for the operation or management of the facilities, the requirements of subdivision (d) shall apply to the new entity prior to commencement of any agreement.

(f) The State of California is not liable for any debts, liabilities, settlements, liens, or any other obligations incurred by or imposed upon the joint powers agency. The joint powers agreement executed pursuant to this section shall expressly provide that the General Fund and the Fair and Exposition Fund shall be held harmless from all debts, liabilities, settlements, judgments, or liens incurred by the joint powers agency, and that neither the state nor any agency or division thereof shall be liable for any contract, tort, action or inaction, error in judgment, mistake, or other act taken by the joint powers agency, or any of its employees, agents, servants, invitees, guests, or anyone acting in concert with, or on the behalf of, the joint powers agency.

SEC. 4. Section 31108 of the Food and Agricultural Code is amended to read:

31108. (a) The required holding period for a stray dog impounded pursuant to this division shall be six business days, not including the day of impoundment, except as follows:

(1) If the public or private shelter has made the dog available for owner redemption on one weekday evening until at least 7 p.m. or one weekend day, the holding period shall be four business days, not including the day of impoundment.

(2) If the public or private shelter has fewer than three full-time employees or is not open during all regular weekday business hours, and if it has established a procedure to enable owners to reclaim their dogs by appointment at a mutually agreeable time when the public or private shelter would otherwise be closed, the holding period shall be four business days, not including the day of impoundment.

Except as provided in Section 17006, stray dogs shall be held for owner redemption during the first three days of the holding period, not including the day of impoundment, and shall be available for owner redemption or adoption for the remainder of the holding period.

(b) Except as provided in Section 17006, any stray dog that is impounded pursuant to this division shall, prior to the euthanasia of that animal, be released to a nonprofit, as defined in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, animal rescue or adoption organization if requested by the organization prior to the scheduled euthanasia of that animal. The public or private shelter may enter into cooperative agreements with any animal rescue or adoption organization. In addition to any required spay or neuter deposit, the public or private shelter, at its discretion, may assess a fee, not to exceed the standard adoption fee, for animals adopted or released.

(c) During the holding period required by this section and prior to the adoption or euthanasia of a dog impounded pursuant to this division, a public or private shelter shall scan the dog for a microchip that identifies the owner of that dog and shall make reasonable efforts to contact the owner and notify him or her that his or her dog is impounded and is available for redemption.

(d) As used in this division, a “business day” includes any day that a public or private shelter is open to the public for at least four hours, excluding state holidays.

SEC. 5. Section 31752 of the Food and Agricultural Code is amended to read:

31752. (a) The required holding period for a stray cat impounded pursuant to this division shall be six business days, not including the day of impoundment, except as follows:

(1) If the public or private shelter has made the cat available for owner redemption on one weekday evening until at least 7 p.m. or one weekend day, the holding period shall be four business days, not including the day of impoundment.

(2) If the public or private shelter has fewer than three full-time employees or is not open during all regular weekday business hours, and if it has established a procedure to enable owners to reclaim their cats by appointment at a mutually agreeable time when the public or private shelter would otherwise be closed, the holding period shall be four business days, not including the day of impoundment.

Except as provided in Sections 17006 and 31752.5, stray cats shall be held for owner redemption during the first three days of the holding period, not including the day of impoundment, and shall be available for owner redemption or adoption for the remainder of the holding period.

(b) Except as provided in Section 17006, any stray cat that is impounded pursuant to this division shall, prior to the euthanasia of that animal, be released to a nonprofit, as defined in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, animal rescue or adoption organization if requested by the organization prior to the scheduled euthanasia of that animal. In addition to any required spay or neuter deposit, the public or private shelter, at its discretion, may assess a fee, not to exceed the standard adoption fee, for animals adopted or released. The public or private shelter may enter into cooperative agreements with any animal rescue or adoption organization.

(c) During the holding period required by this section and prior to the adoption or euthanasia of a cat impounded pursuant to this division, a public or private shelter shall scan the cat for a microchip that identifies the owner of that cat and shall make reasonable efforts to contact the owner and notify him or her that his or her cat is impounded and is available for redemption.

(d) As used in this division, a “business day” includes any day that a public or private shelter is open to the public for at least four hours, excluding state holidays.

SEC. 6. Section 77067 of the Food and Agricultural Code is amended to read:

77067. No member of the commission or of any committee established by the commission that may include nonmembers of the commission shall receive a salary. Except for ex officio government members, the members may receive an amount not to exceed reasonable and necessary traveling expenses and meal allowances, as established by the commission, for each day spent in actual attendance at, or in traveling to and from, meetings of the commission or committees of the commission, or on special assignment for the commission, as approved by the commission.